

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES \$432,265 TO CITIZENS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Congressman Roy Blunt joined Greg Branum, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development, in touring Citizens Memorial Hospital (CMH) in Bolivar, Mo. and seeing first hand the improvements of the electronic medical records (EMR) program. During the visit a Mock Check in the amount of \$432,265 was presented to Don Babb, Chief Executive Officer of CMH which was used to fund the improvements.

"It is programs like this that I am most proud of --- helping to improve the medical service to rural residents," said Blunt. "The technology will set a new standard for continuity of service. Each doctor and provider will have at their fingertips the latest lab work, X-rays and medical history to better to decide what care to provide."



"These Rural Development funds will help CMH with health care delivery to rural Missourians due to electronic interaction between the hospital, clinic and care facilities including digital image storage and retrieval, improved point of care interfaces for medical orders, and improved electronic medical records handling," said Branum. "I would like to personally thank everyone involved in this project. Financing essential services for rural residents is consistent with USDA Rural Development's mission and President Bush's commitment to the future of rural communities."

"The grant of \$432,265 will be used to link Citizens Memorial Hospital in Bolivar to 16 rural health clinics and five long-term care facilities in rural areas," said Don Babb. "With this grant we will be able to digitize X-rays taken in our rural health clinics so they can be compared with digital X-rays taken at the hospital. We will be interfacing our lab analyzers in rural clinics so that results can be automatically captured into the emergency room. We will be expanding the number of lab tests available to rural residents and providing instant access to those test results using point of care lab devices, and will be upgrading our computer network and infrastructure to assure that the EMR is available 24/7 to physicians and other care givers."

Branum pointed out that the grant is part of Rural Development's Distance Learning and Telemedicine program designed to enhance educational and health care services in rural America. This year 227 grant applications were received and the grant to CMH was one of only thirty-five to fund medicals service improvements. During the past five years, USDA's Rural Development has invested over \$4.6 billion in telecommunications programs across America. A complete list of the successful applicants can be seen at www.rurdev.usda.gov

Branum added, “Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators “Kit” Bond and Jim Talent plus U.S. Representatives Roy Blunt for making available federal monies for funding this kind of project.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$63 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Over 1.1 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

“Committed to the future of rural communities.”

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